

Decision Record
And
Finding of No Significant Impact

Placer Dome U.S., Inc.
Bald Mountain Mine
Mooney Basin Expansion Project
Environmental Assessment
NV-040-03-032
NVN074280

Decision: It is my decision to authorize the Mooney Basin Expansion Project as described in the proposed action of the Environmental Assessment. I concur with my staff's assessment of the environmental impacts and authorize the proposed action subject to the Ely District Standard Operating Procedures and the monitoring and mitigation requirements of the Bald Mountain Mine EIS. Specific mitigations from these documents that apply to the current proposed action and require special emphasis are listed below:

1. "Removal of pinyon-juniper, mixed shrub and mountain mahogany vegetation on previously undisturbed lands in the proposed action area will be prohibited between May 1 and July 31 to protect nesting birds, particularly neotropical migrants. As an option to this construction constraint period, breeding bird surveys, approved by the Authorized Officer, could be conducted during the breeding season prior to site disturbance to identify if any occupied territories or active nest sites occur within the areas to be disturbed." (Measure 1 from the Record of Decision, Bald Mountain Mine Expansion Project, November 3, 1995)
2. "Mitigation of indirect impacts to cultural resources will be accomplished by continuing to restrict employee access to known archeological sites,...." (Measure 6 from the Record of Decision, Bald Mountain Mine Expansion Project, November 3, 1995) In compliance with this mitigation, Bald Mountain Mine will fence and avoid the two sites within the proposed action that have been recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. These sites are 7563 and 7656 which are documented in "Kautz's Evaluation of the effect of the proposed Bald Mountain Mine's Mooney Basin Project (POO Mod. III)" CRR 04-2004-1519. All other sites within the project area have been recommended as not eligible; therefore, no additional archaeological work (site visits, treatment, inventory) will be required.
3. Approximately 3.25 acres, as shown in the Mooney Basin Expansion Project Environmental Assessment, will require archeology inventory prior to earth disturbing activities along with possible avoidance or treatment to archaeological sites found during this inventory. This 3.25 acre area, located on the east side of the future Saga Waste Dump, is outside of the previous archeology inventory. (From the Ely District Standard Operating Procedures and the Cultural Resource SOP in the Record of Decision, Bald Mountain Mine Expansion Project, November 3, 1995.)
4. In accordance with 43 CFR 3809, all Plans of Operations will be fully bonded

prior to earth disturbing activities. Bald Mountain Mine has chosen phased bonding for this project. The bond cost estimate associated with this proposal does not include the East Bida, Belmont, Saga pits and associated haul roads and waste rock stockpiles. (See the associated text and figures in the Environmental Assessment and Plan of Operations.) Bond calculations and bond updates for these components must be submitted prior to beginning earth disturbing activities for these components.

Rationale: As a result of the analysis for the Mooney Basin Expansion Project, it was determined that the proposed action will not result in unnecessary or undue degradation to the public lands. The proposed action is in conformance with the Egan Resource Management Plan and is consistent with the White Pine County Land Use Plan.

Implementation of the proposed action will allow Bald Mountain Mine to continue mining within Mooney Basin for at least an additional six years and in a manner that minimizes risk and impact to the environment. The impacts resulting from the proposed action will be mitigated through the application of the standard operating procedures which are a part of the proposed action, as well as the mandatory regulatory requirements for the various State permits issued to Bald Mountain Mine.

FONSI: Based on the analysis of Environmental Assessment NV-040-03-032, I have determined that the quality of the human environment will not be significantly impacted as a result of this decision. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Rationale: This finding of no significant impact is based on the following. There are no unique or unknown risks that will occur as a result of this proposed action. There are no significant effects, either beneficial or adverse, that will result as a consequence of the proposed action. The proposed action will not affect unique characteristics of the geographic area. The proposed action will not adversely affect sites that are in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. There are no endangered or threatened species or habitat that would be affected by the proposed action.

Assistant Ely Field Manager
Nonrenewable Resources

Date